

TRC Conference Call Meeting Notes

August 24, 2015

Attending

Area I: Lord Fairfax SWCD staff, Loudoun SWCD staff

Area II: Claire Hilsen

Area III: Jim Tate, Keith Burgess, Brandon Dillistin, Three Rivers SWCD staff,

Area IV: Big Sandy SWCD staff

Area V: Kelly Snoddy

Area VI: John Allen, Megen Terrien, Eastern Shore SWCD staff

DCR: Barbara McGarry, Scott Ambler, Roland Owens

Others:

- TRC conference call meeting documents on website
A new link titled “TRC Conference Calls” has been added to the http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil_and_water/rmp.shtml website under the header “Resources for Soil and Water Conservation Districts. On this new page (direct link http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil_and_water/rmp-trc-conf-call.shtml), meeting agendas, meeting notes, and associated documents are listed by conference call date.
- Fix for drawing error on PDFs on module
Some TRC users experience a “drawing error” message when opening an attached pdf map export in the RMP module. The message appears when Adobe Reader attempts to open the file.
Several short-term solutions have been provided for these users.
One option is to install a free, open source pdf reader. Roland suggests a Sumatra pdf reader. He sent an e-mail on July 28 with a link to the Sumatra download site.

Another option to continue to use Adobe Reader is:

Click “okay” on the error message. After the message disappears, look on the far left in Adobe Reader under the Open File button. You will see several icons in a gray column. One of these icons is a “layers” icon. It appears as a diamond shape on top of another. Click this icon and a list of available layers appears just to the right of the icon. Under the folder “Plan Map”, you should see the “polygon” layer listed twice. On the first “polygon” layer, click to unselect, by clicking the eyeball image to the left of the word “polygon”.

- Completeness Checklist

An SWCD with a currently active TRC has developed a checklist that they use when conducting a completeness review. They have shared the document for other SWCDs to use. There is no requirement to use this document; it is provided as a tool that may be helpful to SWCDs. This document has not yet been provided electronically, but will be posted on the TRC website as a document associated with this conference call.

- RMP status tracker worksheet

Another active TRC has shared a document that they use to track RMPs as they are submitted. This is particularly helpful as they receive multiple submitted plans at the same time. If available on a shared drive, any staff person could track all activities of a given plan. This spreadsheet tracks the plan by plan number, documents the completeness review and who conducted the review, and tracks the TRC review activities. There is no requirement to use this worksheet, but is being provided as a tool that may be helpful to some. This is available on the TRC website.

In the near future, SWCD staff will have the ability to track plan status information using the RMP module, and eventually using the Logi report server application.

- Time Log for voluntarily tracking TRC hours

DCR RMP staff are hearing that RMP Operational Support reimbursements to SWCDs for plan review may not be adequate. While there is no guarantee that rates may change, it would be helpful for DCR to know the number of hours associated with review and inspections associated with a plan. It was suggested during the August conference call that Districts may begin keeping track of hours of time

- RMP Approval Letters

District staff were reminded to click the “Approve plan” button only when the plan has been approved by the Board, not when the TRC recommends the plan for approval. When approved, there is a prompt to enter the approval date. While the language currently states “Review Date”, this language will be changed in the module to indicate that this should be the Board approval date.

After the plan has been approved in the module, a form letter becomes available in the details tab. There are currently some problems with the address information and dates that auto-populate into the form letter. These problems have been recorded as bugs to be fixed. DCR reminded Districts that this letter can be modified in Word. District letterhead can be added as a header and generic language can be changed. If the letter is modified, it is suggested that the letter be saved and attached to the plan.

It is acceptable to e-mail this letter as an attachment to the participant instead of mailing a hard copy.

- Recap discussion about existing historic buffers and required maps
Although discussed at the July meeting, there have been continuing questions about when to identify an existing buffer within a land management area. A buffer can be documented as a BMP only when it is a recently installed buffer (either cost-shared or voluntary). If the buffer is historic (has been in this land use) for more than a few years, it should not be recorded as a BMP.
RMP module enhancements will include the ability to digitize land features instead of only indicating a feature as a BMP. This will be particularly helpful in documenting streams and historic buffers. At this point, the only way to document streams and historic/existing buffers is for the plan developer to draw these features on a map, scan the map, and attach the map to the RMP.
- BMP planned acres versus affected acres
Clarification was provided on planned vs affected acres. Planned acres encompass the entire buffer or length for fence while affected acres indicate the acres or feet that are contained within a field polygon.
- Other questions/comments
Question: Can it be required that the plan developer map existing buffers?
Response: Yes, but use discretion. If the buffer is several hundred feet, then no; if the buffer width is close to the required 35', then yes.

Comment: In the module, when a TRC user rejects the plan and adds text in the comment box, the text is garbled.

Response: Add comments in the comments tab instead of as a comment in the event log. The comments tab allows a thread conversation.

Or, write the comments in a more formal memo in MS Word. Save the file and attach to the module. Refer to the attached memo from the comments box. This method will prevent the loss of comments created, but not yet saved if the module does a security time-out while comments are being written.